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ABSTRACT

In March 2002 the Higher Education Funding Council for England issued a report that set out categories of information that should be available within the higher education institution and that should be published as part of the revised quality assurance framework for higher education in England. This document provides final guidance on the provision of information on quality and standards of teaching and learning in higher education to be published on a national Teaching Quality Information (TQI) Web site. Institutions will be able to begin loading their reports onto the TQI Web site from March 2003 and are expected to provide the first complete set of annual information by December 2003. The detailed guidance in this report will be supplemented by further advice, support, and tools. (Author/SLD)

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ED 482 115

October 2003/**51**

Core funding/operations

Guidance

TQI contacts sent to HERO by 1 December; mappings to JACS codes submitted by 1 March 2004; first set of information published by December 2004

This document provides final guidance on the provision of information on quality and standards of teaching and learning in higher education, to be published on a national Teaching Quality Information (TQI) web-site. Institutions will be able to begin loading their reports onto the TQI site from March 2004, and are expected to provide the first complete set of annual information by December 2004.

Information on quality and standards in higher education

Final guidance

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

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Contents

	Page
Executive summary	3
Introduction and background	5
Quantitative information for publication	6
Qualitative information for publication	7
Rationale for revisions to the TQI specification	9
Publication method	9
Implementation timetable	10
Legal issues	11
Monitoring, evaluation and costs	11
Information which should be available internally in HEIs	13
Annex A Templates for qualitative information	
A1 Template for summaries of the findings of external examiners	14
A2 Template for summaries of institutions' learning and teaching strategies	15
A3 Template for summaries of periodic programme/departmental reviews	16
Annex B Summary of the TQI pilot	18
Annex C Summary of issues raised at the TQI seminars	20
Annex D Explanation of revisions to the published information specification	24
Annex E Form to nominate institutional TQI contacts	30
Annex F JACS principal subjects and HESA subject areas	31
Annex G Summary of legal issues and advice	37
Annex H Information which should be available in all HEIs	40
List of abbreviations	43

Information on quality and standards in higher education: final guidance

To	Heads of HEFCE-funded higher education institutions Heads of HEFCE-funded further education colleges Heads of universities in Northern Ireland
Of interest to those responsible for	Quality assurance, Information management
Reference	2003/**51**
Publication date	October 2003
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Executive summary

Purpose

1. This document provides final guidance on the information on quality and standards of teaching and learning in higher education (HE), to be published on a national Teaching Quality Information (TQI) web-site.

Key points

2. In March 2002, 'Information on quality and standards in higher education: Final report of the task group' (HEFCE 02/15) was published. The report set out categories of information

that should be available within higher education institutions (HEIs), and those that should be published, as part of the revised quality assurance framework for HE in England.

3. During 2003, HERO was commissioned to pilot the information for publication with six HEIs, in order to test the system and recommend any improvements. This document sets out the final guidance on information for publication following the pilot, and subsequent discussions between relevant stakeholders.

4. Several revisions have been made to the HEFCE 02/15 specification of the dataset, to improve its utility to the public and to minimise costs to institutions. Key among these are:

a. Provision of quantitative data at a finer level of granularity, and inclusion of part-time and postgraduate students.
b. More formulaic summaries of the conclusions of external examiners, and greater flexibility for institutions to provide these at programme or subject level.
c. Publication of the results of a new national student survey at subject level, and removal of the need to publish the results of internal student feedback.

5. HERO has been commissioned to publish the information through a TQI web-site, and to provide support to HEIs. The site will be publicly accessible from summer 2004, and the first full set of information, including summaries of the findings of external examiners, should be available on the site by December 2004.

6. The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) is currently consulting on the detailed specification of the quantitative data, prior to providing these data to HERO for publication.

Actions required

7. This document sets out a number of requirements for institutions to provide data for publication on the TQI site. In the short-term, HEIs should:

a. Use the form provided at Annex E to nominate TQI contacts to liaise with HERO, by 1 December 2003.
b. Produce a mapping of anticipated reports to JACS principal subjects, and provide this to HERO using software provided, by 1 March 2004.
c. Access the HESA consultation on the quantitative data, available at www.hesa.ac.uk/circulars/student/home.htm

8. Institutions will be able to begin loading their reports onto the TQI site from March 2004, and are expected to provide the first complete set of annual information by December 2004. Thereafter institutions will need to maintain and update the information. Detailed guidance is set out in this document, and HERO will provide further advice, support and tools to facilitate this.

Introduction and background

9. Following the completion of subject review by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), the revised quality assurance framework for HE in England has been built on the following principles:

a. Recognising the primary responsibility of each HEI to operate robust internal mechanisms for setting, maintaining and reviewing quality and standards; for generating information about its quality and standards; and for publishing the key parts of that information.

b. Meeting public information needs, so that stakeholders – and above all students – can obtain information which is up-to-date, consistent and reliable about the quality and standards of teaching and learning at different HEIs.

c. Lightness of touch, so that the burden on HEIs is reduced to the minimum consistent with proper accountability and meeting information needs, and so that the greatest value is secured from the resources used.

10. In devising the new quality assurance framework, which would no longer generate published outcomes of external review at subject level, the sector representative bodies, the QAA and HEFCE agreed that a new set of published information about quality and standards would need to be developed. Accurate and up-to-date information about the quality and standards of provision was recognised as important to enable potential students and their advisers to make informed decisions, to inform the judgements of other stakeholders, and to secure accountability for the use of public funds.

11. In order to define this new set of public information, a Task Group chaired by Professor Sir Ron Cooke, then Vice-Chancellor of the University of York, was set up in 2001, to review and make recommendations on:

- the information relating to quality and standards which all HEIs should be expected, as a matter of standard good practice, to collect and have available within the institution
- information that should be published by all HEIs
- the definitions that should apply to secure consistency of data across the sector
- the format and frequency of publication.

12. The Task Group analysed findings of studies about the information needs of students and other stakeholders. This analysis confirmed the importance of teaching quality as one of several key factors considered by prospective students when selecting what and where to study. For many students, this was found to be especially important at the stage during the applications process when they develop a short-list of choices, although often they used published entry requirements as a proxy indicator of quality. The analysis also confirmed the general demand by prospective students for the information to relate to individual programmes.

13. The Task Group then developed proposals for internal information about quality and standards, and, drawing as far as possible from existing sources of information, for categories of information to be published. In November 2001 initial proposals for consultation (including a summary of the evidence on public information needs) were published in 'Information on quality and standards of teaching and learning: proposals for consultation' (HEFCE 01/66).

14. A total of 180 responses to the consultation were received. Responses broadly supported the proposals, but also raised areas of concern and further questions. The Task Group revised the proposals accordingly and published the updated categories of information in March 2002 in 'Information on quality and standards in higher education: Final report of the Task Group' (HEFCE 02/15). The categories of information for publication, as set out in HEFCE 02/15, included quantitative data to be provided by HESA, qualitative data to be provided by HEIs, and the introduction of a new national survey to gain feedback from students about teaching quality. HEFCE 02/15 also proposed that the information should be published electronically, through the HERO portal.

15. HEFCE 02/15 noted that additional work would be required to implement its recommendations. In collaboration with Universities UK, QAA and the Standing Conference of Principals (SCOP), we commissioned HERO to conduct a pilot with six HEIs to develop and test the means of implementing the TQI recommendations and publishing the data through the HERO web-site. The pilot was conducted between February and May 2003. This pilot excluded student feedback, which has been developed in a separate project but will be integrated with the other published information when completed.

16. Following the TQI pilot, the HEIs involved have provided feedback, two seminars have been held to discuss the pilot outcomes with all HEIs, and recommendations on the final TQI requirements have been developed and discussed at the Boards of HEFCE, Universities UK, SCOP and QAA. The final specification for TQI agreed between these bodies is set out below.

17. To comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, HEIs will need to adopt a publication scheme from 29 February 2004. A model scheme for HEIs is available on the web at www.dataprotection.gov.uk, and this includes the types of information about quality and standards that are covered in this document. Institutions may therefore find it useful to refer in their publication schemes to the TQI site as the means of publishing these categories of information.

18. This document applies to HEIs in England and Northern Ireland. There are continuing discussions about the publication of similar information on the TQI web-site for Welsh and Scottish HEIs. The Welsh and Scottish funding councils will issue guidance for these institutions in due course.

Quantitative information for publication

19. HESA will provide the following data to HERO for publication on the TQI web-site:

a. Data on students' entry qualifications and tariff points.

b. Data on students continuing at the institution, completing awards and leaving without awards (separately for students after the first year of study, and for all years of study).

c. Data on class of first degree achieved by students.

d. Data on leavers entering employment or further study, or unemployed, and data on the most common job types held by employed leavers.

20. Data will be provided at levels down to JACS principal subjects for each institution. Users of the TQI web-site will be offered the 19 subject areas defined by HESA as standard combinations of these subjects, and will also be able to select subject combinations essentially of their own choosing, down to and including individual JACS principal subjects. However, data will not be provided to users where the numbers are so small as to render them meaningless. Where this occurs, users of the site will be offered broader combinations of subjects.

21. For each HEI in England and Northern Ireland, data will include students on undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes who are registered at the HEI. This includes students franchised to other providers, provision funded by the NHS or the Teacher Training Agency (TTA), and overseas and privately funded students registered at the HEI.

22. Where appropriate, published information will be presented separately by mode of study (full-time or part-time) and by level of study (taught postgraduate, first degree, or other undergraduate).

23. The data will not include performance indicators or benchmarks, but links will be provided to web-sites providing institution-level performance indicators and benchmarks.

24. Prior to providing the data to HERO, HESA is consulting on the detailed specification of the data, including the definitions and descriptions to be used, rounding strategies and data protection, and the treatment of certain categories of students. The consultation can be found on the HESA web-site, www.hesa.ac.uk/circulars/student/home.htm. Responses to the consultation should be provided to HESA by 5 December 2003.

Qualitative information for publication

25. HEIs should provide the following information for publication on the TQI web-site:

a. Summaries of the findings of external examiners, at programme or subject level, produced annually. A template for the summaries is provided at Annex A1. For good practice reasons, we recommend that summaries should be authored by external examiners. Where it is more appropriate for the HEI to prepare the summaries, the

text should be approved by the relevant examiners. The template includes the opportunity for HEIs to respond to the findings of examiners.

b. A summary of the institution's learning and teaching strategy, as it has been presented to HEFCE under the Teaching Quality Enhancement Fund programme. A template is provided at Annex A2. The summary should be updated when the strategy itself is updated.

c. Summary statements of the results of, and the actions taken in response to, periodic programme or departmental reviews, to be undertaken at intervals of not more than six years. A template is provided at Annex A3.

d. Summaries of the HEI's links with relevant employers, how the institution identifies employer needs and opinions, and how those are used to develop the relevance and richness of learning programmes. This information could be provided as a separate summary, or included as part of learning and teaching strategies (item b above) and supplemented in individual programme specifications.

26. In addition:

a. HEIs will have the option of providing an explanation of the external examination structure at the institution.

b. The national student survey is currently being piloted, with a view to full-scale implementation in 2004. We expect that HERO will publish the results when available, integrated with the other TQI data.

c. QAA has re-stated its published policy that programme specifications, which are a valuable source of information for prospective students and recruiters of graduates, should be made publicly available, and will be monitoring this in its institutional audits from December 2004. Where HEIs publish programme specifications on their web-sites, they are encouraged to link these to the TQI site. HERO will develop a common addressing methodology to facilitate this.

d. The TQI site should include links to relevant reports on the QAA web-site.

27. The templates for the information in Annex A include recommended word limits. Feedback from the pilot suggests that users prefer succinct summaries, and we strongly recommend that reports remain within these limits. HEIs will be able to include in the summaries web links to longer documents on their own web-sites, to provide further elaboration.

28. HEIs should provide the qualitative information for all their undergraduate and taught postgraduate provision, and for awards made in their name through collaborative arrangements with further education colleges (FECs) and overseas providers. Institutions do not need to provide qualitative information for 'closed' courses that are wholly privately funded. Programmes funded by the NHS and the TTA are subject to separate quality assurance systems, including external review and the publication of outcomes, so HEIs are not required to publish the qualitative information for this provision at this time. However, a quality monitoring and enhancement system for NHS-funded provision is currently being developed. It will seek to avoid duplication with these TQI requirements, and if possible will use the same system.

29. The scope and coverage of the qualitative data differs from that of the quantitative data in two main respects:

a. The quantitative data relate to students and the coverage is defined by the students for which each HEI is responsible. The qualitative information is mainly related to awards, and coverage is therefore related to the awards for which each HEI is responsible. For these reasons the qualitative information covers a wider range of collaborative provision than the quantitative data, and also includes overseas provision.

b. At this time, the qualitative information excludes TTA and NHS funded provision, for the reasons stated above. However, this provision will be included in the quantitative data as HESA is able to provide it at no additional cost to institutions.

Rationale for revisions to the TQI specification

30. The above specification of the qualitative and quantitative information for publication, and the template for external examiner summaries, includes several revisions to the proposals made in HEFCE 02/15. These have resulted from lessons learned from the pilot, including feedback from the HEIs involved and from the stakeholder focus groups that used the pilot web-site, discussions with institutions at two events during June 2003, and discussions at the Boards of HEFCE, Universities UK, SCOP and QAA. A summary of the pilot and its outcomes is at Annex B, and the full report on the pilot can be found at www.hefce.ac.uk under Publications/R&D reports, 'Report of the teaching quality information pilot project'. A summary of the main issues raised at the events is at Annex C. A discussion of the specific reasons for these revisions is at Annex D.

Publication method

31. Following the successful delivery of the pilot, we have commissioned HERO to develop and provide the TQI web-site and to support institutions. This will include the provision of appropriate hardware and software, tools to enable institutions to mount their material, technical support to those in HEIs working with the HERO site, and advice on the specifics of the site. A dedicated extranet site will be provided, with frequently asked questions, exemplars of summaries and other supporting documentation. HERO will also provide technical seminars to help prepare institutions.

32. Each HEI already has a HERO contact who is responsible for mounting and updating material on the HERO web-site. Each HEI should nominate a lead TQI contact and a technical contact (who may or may not be the same person), a management contact, and several additional individuals who will be copied in to communications from HERO and will have access to the extranet and technical seminars. Institutions should use the form, attached at Annex E, to nominate and provide details of these individuals. Forms should be returned to HERO by 1 December 2003.

33. The TQI site will be part of the HERO web-site, and will house the information, as defined in this document, for each institution. The nominated TQI contacts will manage their institution's information housed on the TQI site. In doing so, these contacts will need to ensure that HERO standards and protocols are adhered to. As set out in this document, HEIs are encouraged to provide links from the TQI site back to additional information, including programme specifications, on their own web-sites.

34. Information on the TQI site will comprise:

a. HESA data at JACS principal subject level and above.

b. Summaries of external examiners' findings and internal major reviews. These will be at a combination of programme, subject or department levels, as defined by institutions.

c. Institution-level documents, and links to other institution-level information (such as QAA audit reports and performance indicators and benchmarks).

35. It is anticipated that users will be able to search the site by institution, region and subject. In order to enable integration of the data at these various levels, all the data (with the exception of institution-level reports) will need to be mapped against JACS principal subjects. These are listed, alongside HESA subject areas, at Annex F. Qualitative summaries may map to several principal subject codes, and vice versa, in a many-to-many relationship. An early task for each institution is to decide on its reporting structures for both the summaries of external examiners' findings and departmental/programme reviews. Institutions should map the anticipated reports against the JACS principal subjects, and provide the mapping to HERO, using software to be provided, by 1 March 2004.

Implementation timetable

36. The timetable for implementation is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Timetable for implementation

Task/milestone	Date
HERO support and extranet available	From November 2003
Institutions to provide details of TQI contacts to HERO	1 December 2003
Deadline for institutions to respond to HESA consultation on the quantitative data	5 December 2003
HERO to provide technical training seminars for HEIs	From January 2004
HERO to complete design and build of the TQI input site	February 2004
HEIs to provide HERO with a mapping of anticipated reports to JACS principal subject codes	1 March 2004
HEIs to begin loading qualitative data	From March 2004
HESA to provide HEIs with a preview of their data, and provide HERO with the first annual set of quantitative data	Spring 2004
TQI web-site goes live (with partial dataset)	June 2004
Complete set of annual information published on TQI site for all HEIs. This will include HESA data, summaries of L&T strategies, and external examiner summaries relating to the 2003-04 academic year.	December 2004

37. It is expected that the annual data provided by HESA and annual summaries of external examiner findings will build up on the TQI site until, in 2006, three annual sets of data are published. Thereafter, three complete years of data will be kept live on the site; each year, once a new set is available, the oldest will be removed.

38. Summaries of the findings of external examiners are normally expected to be published within six months of the completion of student assessment. The institution's response to a summary (field 9 of the template) can be added subsequently. In certain circumstances, where the findings of external examiners would expose the HEI to legal liabilities or unfairly damage its reputation, the publication of this information may need to be delayed or withheld. These circumstances are defined in Annex D, paragraphs 13-15.

39. It is expected that summaries of learning and teaching strategies will be published by June 2004, and will be updated by HEIs as and when they update their full strategies.

40. Summaries of periodic programme or departmental reviews should be published within six months of the completion of the reviews. These summaries will be kept live on the TQI site until such time as the HEI replaces them with a new summary (a maximum of six years). There is no expectation that HEIs will retrospectively summarise reviews that were completed prior to 2003-04, although they may choose to do so in order to avoid long gaps in publishing information about programmes or departments that were recently reviewed. In the meantime, links to relevant QAA reports may be provided.

Legal issues

41. As a response to concerns raised by HEIs regarding the legal implications of the TQI dataset, in particular the publication of external examiner report summaries, HEFCE has sought legal advice. Many parties will be involved in the publication of the information, including external examiners, staff at HEIs, HERO and HEFCE. The advice we have received is that the publication of the information does not itself expose any of these organisations or individuals to any additional liability, so long as each party takes care in making their contribution to limit publication to accurate statements and reasonably held opinions. A summary of the issues, and recommendations for institutions, is set out in Annex G.

Monitoring, evaluation and costs

42. A stakeholder group, including representatives of HEFCE, Universities UK and SCOP, will be established to receive regular updates from HERO, including statistics on the site's usage, and to provide advice on the ongoing development of the site and the support service to institutions. HERO will obtain regular feedback on the front-end of the site (presentation of the information) from a stakeholder panel, and on the back-end (input of information) from an HEI user panel. In addition, HERO will host a conference for HEIs during 2005 to receive feedback.

43. The provision of information by institutions will be reviewed through the QAA audit process. As part of the institutional audit, the QAA will make a judgement about the reliance that can be placed on the accuracy, integrity, completeness and frankness of the information that an HEI publishes about the quality of its programmes and the standards of its awards.[1] This judgement will contribute to the main audit judgement about the confidence that can be placed on the soundness of an institution's management of quality and standards.

44. Following recent revisions to the HEFCE model financial memorandum, the Council reserves the right to impose financial sanctions and/or withdraw funding from an institution if it fails to achieve a satisfactory outcome in a re-audit by the QAA. Ultimately, therefore, the provision of inaccurate or incomplete information, and the failure to address such shortcomings for a re-audit, could lead to financial sanctions or the withdrawal of funding.

45. HERO will generate annual reports on the completeness of the information provided by HEIs. This will not involve any additional burden on HEIs. We expect to develop, with the QAA, criteria for identifying and responding to any 'cause for concern' that may result from the failure to publish required information, including the withholding of external examiner summaries for reasons not deemed legitimate.

46. We have been concerned through the process of piloting and refining the TQI specification to avoid unnecessary costs and burden on HEIs. The pilot project produced estimates of the costs of TQI to the sector, based on the specification set out in HEFCE 02/15. Depending on the calculation method, the estimated maximum set-up costs were between £4 million and £7 million; and the estimated maximum recurrent costs for maintaining the system were between £5 million and £8 million. Further details are in the pilot report, see paragraph 30.

47. However, the information set has since been revised in ways which will lead to a number of cost reductions, and we believe the above estimates are now too high. The greater flexibility for HEIs to determine the structure of external examiner summaries, and the more formulaic nature of the template for these summaries, should enable institutions to set up and maintain TQI at significantly lower cost than that implied by the above estimates.

48. The overall direct cost to the sector of the previous QA system based on subject review, has been estimated at £45-50 million per year. The annual cost of implementing TQI, added to the cost of institutional audit and other elements of the new QA framework, should be substantially lower than that, and will be kept under review.

49. The Better Regulation Task Force recommended that 'HEFCE should evaluate the impact of the new QAA regime and the proposals in the Cooke report for publishing data two years after implementation' ('Higher Education: Easing the Burden', July 2002, on the web at www.brtf.gov.uk). We are committed to undertaking this review in partnership with QAA, Universities UK and SCOP, to ensure that the new framework, including TQI and the

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[1] Until December 2004, when the first full complete set of data is expected to be published, these judgements will be in relation to progress towards providing the information.

national student survey, delivers its objectives, including reducing burden on the sector and meeting the public information need.

Information which should be available internally in HEIs

50. Paragraph 11 of HEFCE 02/15 (reproduced at Annex H) remains the definitive statement of the categories of information that should be available internally in HEIs, for the purposes of setting, developing and monitoring quality and standards. This document only addresses the following points about the internal information:

a. Paragraph 60 of HEFCE 02/15 states that each HEI would create a section of its web-site as a secure intranet service for the internal information. Given that not all HEIs would have all the information in electronic format, this should not now be read as a requirement. Institutions should decide how best to store and organise the information so long as it is readily available for the intended purposes.

b. We commissioned a project to produce guidance on good practice in collecting and using internal student feedback. The project report will be published by the Learning and Teaching Support Network. It highlights the need to ensure that the specific purposes and intended uses of internal surveys are clarified, and that surveys should be tailored to reflect such purposes and uses. The list of issues at paragraph 11.c.iii. in HEFCE 02/15 about which feedback should be collected, should therefore be read as indicative rather than prescriptive.

51. In addition to the information for publication, institutions will be able, at their discretion, to make any of the internal information publicly available through links from the TQI web-site.

Annex A1
Template for summaries of the findings of external examiners

Summaries should be for each programme or subject area. The summary should be either authored by or agreed by the relevant examiners.

A maximum of 300 words is recommended for textual fields.

If no text is entered in fields 8 or 9, the fields will not appear on the TQI site.

1. Name of HEI.

2a. Title of the summary (this could be a subject area or named awards).

2b. List of awards partially or wholly covered by the summary.

3. Academic year examined.

4. Home institution and/or other professional/institutional affiliation of external examiners.

5a. A yes/no response to the following statement: 'In the view of the examiners, the standards set for the awards are appropriate for qualifications at this level, in this subject.'

5b. If no, a statement of the respects in which they fall short.

6a. A yes/no response to the following statement: 'In the view of the examiners the standards of student performance are comparable with similar programmes or subjects in other UK institutions with which they are familiar.'

6b. If no, a statement of the respects in which they fall short.

7a. A yes/no response to the following statement: 'In the view of the examiners, the processes for assessment, examination and the determination of awards are sound and fairly conducted.'

7b. If no, a statement of the respects in which they fall short.

8. Where appropriate, a description or bullet point list of any particular strengths or distinctive or innovative features in relation to standards and assessment processes, that would be worth drawing to the attention of external audiences.

9. Where appropriate, a description or bullet point list of actions taken by the HEI in response to the report. This would be completed subsequently by the HEI, normally in response to stated shortcomings.

Annex A2
Template for summaries of institutions' learning and teaching strategies

A maximum of 1,500 words is recommended.

1. Name of institution or details of partnership.

2. Date of review.

3. Development of learning and teaching strategy. A brief statement of what the institution wants to achieve with its learning and teaching strategy, ways in which it reflects the institution's mission, and how it has been informed by previous experience in learning and teaching.

4. Content of the strategy. A brief statement of:
   - objectives which are explicitly linked to the institution's strategy
   - ways in which the strategy is designed to meet the needs of an expanding and diverse student population
   - policies, if any, designed to enhance the quality of learning and teaching.

5. Effectiveness of the strategy. A brief statement of monitoring and evaluation procedures, and assessment of the extent to which the strategy is succeeding.

6. Future development. Changes planned by the institution that are designed to further enhance the quality of learning and teaching.

Annex A3
Template for summaries of periodic programme or departmental reviews

A maximum of 1,500 words is recommended.

Field 12 is optional and may be added to the summary after publication. This field will only appear on the TQI site if text is entered.

1. Name of programme, subject area, or department covered by the review.

2. Date of review.

3. Objectives of review.

4. Conduct of the review. A brief statement of how the review was conducted, who was involved, and what review methods they used.

5. Evidence base. A brief statement of the evidence that was drawn on, and specifically what use was made of:

- external examiners' reports
- reports (if any) from accrediting or other bodies
- staff and student feedback
- feedback from former students and their employers.

6. External peer contributors to process. A brief statement on how external peers were involved, how they were selected and what their role was.

7. Overview of the main characteristics of the programmes covered by the review. A brief statement of the review team's overview of the programme in relation to content and approach, and notable strengths.

8. Conclusions on innovation and good practice. Identification of current aspects of the programmes which are particularly innovative or which represent good practice.

9. Conclusions on quality and standards. A brief statement of the review team's conclusions on whether intended learning outcomes are being obtained by students, quality and standards are being achieved, and the programme specification is being delivered.

10. Conclusions on whether the programme(s) remain current and valid in the light of developing knowledge in the discipline, practice in its application, and developments in teaching and learning.

11. Forward-looking recommendations for actions to remedy any identified shortcomings, and for further enhancement of quality and standards. These recommendations might adopt

the institutional audit concept of distinguishing between aspects for commendation and aspects for improvement, with an indication of significance and urgency in the latter.

12. Actions taken by the institution in response to the review.

Annex B
Summary of the TQI pilot

1. In January 2003, a pilot group of six HEIs, chosen as representative examples of the diversity of the sector, began working with HERO to publish their teaching quality information. The participating HEIs were:

- University of Cambridge
- De Montfort University
- Kent Institute of Art and Design
- University of Liverpool
- University of Northumbria at Newcastle
- Open University.

2. The objectives of the pilot were:

a. To identify the problems HEIs might face in providing and loading information onto the HERO site.

b. To identify both the likely costs of initial compliance and the recurrent costs of updating the information with reasonable frequency.

c. To identify the overall information architecture required, including links between HERO and HEI web-sites, and standards and protocols required to facilitate a search function for users.

d. To identify usability of the information and the overall quality of site design for the range of interested audiences. The HERO pilot will also consider whether links are needed between the quality and standards site on HERO and other information sources, with the aim of bringing together pertinent information that might help the user.

e. To comment on any changes to the information requirements which might improve the cost effectiveness or usability for the intended audience.

f. To identify the costs of building and maintaining the site.

g. To pilot detailed instructions for HEIs on providing information and loading it onto the site, including timetabling and processes to be adopted.

3. The pilot HEIs provided qualitative data for two JACS subject groups each: Business and administrative studies, and one other subject of particular relevance for each institution. For the purpose of the pilot, the quantitative data were developed and supplied by HEFCE (in future the data will be supplied by HESA). HERO constructed a pilot web-site with search functions, and the qualitative and quantitative data were loaded onto it.

4. The pilot TQI web-site was tested with a number of focus groups made up of the stakeholders at whom the site was aimed. These included students and potential students, parents, university staff, careers teachers and advisers, and employers.

5. Feedback from the pilot HEIs and from the stakeholder groups fed into a full report of the pilot process and its outcomes. This report is available at www.hefce.ac.uk under

Publications/R&D reports, 'Report of the teaching quality information pilot project'. The key findings of the report include the following:

a. Technically the pilot succeeded; software, data and supporting documentation were provided and tested. A functional pilot web-site was produced, and navigation through multiple levels of information worked well. A number of technical issues to be overcome were also identified, such as standardisation of web links.

b. The focus groups of stakeholders did in general find the TQI dataset useful, especially the quantitative data. Some reservations were expressed about qualitative reports, and groups provided valuable comments on presentation, format and use of language, and highlighted the importance of succinct summaries of qualitative information.

c. All the pilot HEIs managed to produce the data for the pilot to schedule. Pilot HEIs provided detailed feedback on a number of aspects of the project, including technical and presentational issues that will be taken on board by HERO in designing the site, and cost estimates. They raised a number of issues concerning the production of external examiner summaries. The majority of pilot HEIs fed back that when the scheme is rolled out, they would find the process of producing these summaries manageable – and in some ways internally useful – so long as there was greater flexibility to produce summaries at programme or subject level, to fit internal structures. A minority of the pilot HEIs and some external examiners consulted as part of the project raised concerns, including:

- the difficulties the publication of summaries may cause in recruiting and retaining examiners who, it was felt, would generally not welcome this new public role or possible risk of liability
- possible adverse effects on the openness and frankness of examiners' reports
- doubts about the public utility of the information.

d. Based on the pilots, the overall costs of TQI were estimated to be a maximum of £4-7 million to set up and a maximum of £5-8 million to maintain and update annually. The main cost driver was found to be the production of external examiner summaries. The costs could vary greatly between institutions, depending largely on the structure of the external examination system and the institution's approach to handling summaries of reports.

e. Several revisions to the information specification were recommended, to improve the value of the information to the public and to minimise unnecessary costs to institutions. The revisions are discussed in detail in Annex D. A number of improvements to the presentation and formatting of the information sets were also recommended, for HERO to take on board when developing the site.

Annex C
Summary of issues raised at the TQI seminars

1. Two seminars were held in June 2003 to inform the sector about the outcomes of the TQI pilots, and provide an opportunity to discuss future developments. Delegates, who attended from more than 100 institutions, were in general those responsible for quality assurance at their HEIs.

2. The agenda for the seminars was as follows:
   a. Two of the HEIs involved in the pilot described their experiences and the lessons they had learned.
   b. HERO provided an overview of the pilot process, development of the TQI web-site and stakeholder feedback from the pilot.
   c. Officers of HEFCE outlined proposed revisions to the information set, in the light of the pilot, and the proposed implementation timetable.
   d. The Director of Reviews at the QAA described the relationship between TQI and the QAA audit process.
   e. Delegates discussed the issues arising in break-out sessions, provided feedback and raised questions for the panel of speakers.

3. The following paragraphs summarise the main issues raised by delegates. Many of these issues are resolved elsewhere within this document, or are addressed in the HESA consultation on the quantitative data. A number of the detailed issues raised will be addressed on HERO's extranet site, under 'frequently asked questions'.

Quantitative information

4. Although recognised as potentially very useful, delegates felt the quantitative data as presented lacked explanation, and they supported the need for improved descriptions on the TQI site. They also suggested that institutions should be able to provide additional contextual information, to help users interpret the data.

5. Related to this, delegates noted that the data do not measure 'value added'. Users would need to make their own interpretation of 'value added' from across the available categories of data.

6. The data presented at the seminars did not separate first degree students from other undergraduates. Some delegates were concerned with the distorted picture this might provide for some provision, and supported the separation of different types of qualifications.

7. Some delegates suggested that postgraduate data should be kept separate from undergraduate data, to recognise the different information needs of undergraduate and postgraduate applicants.

8. The treatment of joint honours students, as identified in the pilot as an area for concern, was also raised during the discussions. Currently, joint honours students are

treated as two separate partial students in the HESA data. Delegates felt that, especially for institutions with significant numbers of joint degree students, this could provide a distorted picture.

9. Internal transfers were also highlighted as a potentially problematic area. Some argued that stakeholders would be interested in knowing how many students completed the programme they started, rather than any programme at the institution (as the HESA data currently show).

Qualitative information

10. Several issues were raised in relation to external examiner summaries:

a. Clarification was sought over ownership of the summaries, copyright implications, the potential for litigation and the implications of the Freedom of Information Act for full external examiner reports.

b. Anonymity of external examiners was considered to be necessary by delegates from several institutions.

c. Delegates requested further information on how the accuracy of summaries would be monitored.

d. The need for some dialogue between HEIs and examiners to resolve potential disputes, as well as the right to withhold summaries if unfairly damaging to the institution's reputation, were supported by delegates.

e. Delegates expressed concerns that full public disclosure of external examiners' recommendations could compromise the quality and frankness of their feedback, leading to bland reports of little value to the institution. However, some of the institutions involved in the pilot believed that on the basis of their experience this would not occur, and they expected to preserve the integrity of the full examiners' reports.

f. Clarity was sought on the level at which summaries should be produced, the number of summaries that institutions should produce, and on procedures for dealing with multiple examiners.

g. It was generally felt that public awareness of the role of external examiners needs improving, as delegates were not sure stakeholders understood their role and the function of their reports. The opportunity to provide an institution-level explanation of the examiner system was supported.

h. Some concern was expressed around the training and induction which might be required for external examiners and other members of staff following the introduction

of TQI. Some delegates requested that electronic training material for external examiners be produced.

i. Some delegates suggested that HEFCE should produce a standard letter for institutions to send to their external examiners, setting out the new requirements.

11. For all the qualitative reports, clarification was sought on whether there would be any flexibility around the word limits.

Other issues

12. Delegates were asked to identify any technical difficulties they could foresee. However, most felt they were not the relevant people to discuss these matters, and supported the suggestion that HERO should host further events which would focus on the more technical side of loading and maintaining the datasets.

13. Delegates sought clarification on the scope of TQI, and in particular whether or not it would be necessary to publish TQI data for privately funded programmes.

14. There was discussion about the integration of data at different levels, and delegates sought clarification about how this would operate. Some delegates from institutions with modular structures believed that information would be most useful at programme level, and they therefore intended to consider internally how to achieve a programme focus for their public information.

15. Feelings were mixed about the timescale for implementation. Delegates expressed concern that they would be appointing their examiners for 2003-04, before the final guidance is published, with the implication that they would need additional communications with examiners to finalise reporting arrangements, after the guidance is issued.

16. The intended audience for and usage of the TQI web-site were discussed. Some delegates anticipated that parents and/or careers advisers would be the main users. Some felt it was unlikely that a single site could satisfy the range of potential users, and suggested the possibility of different presentations targeted at different user groups. Some expressed doubts about the public value of the site, particularly the qualitative information.

17. Some delegates were concerned that the site would include various headings and terminology which would either be inaccessible to the site's users, or were not used consistently across the sector, and therefore could have different meanings when used by different institutions in their reports.

18. Delegates were keen that the use of the site, and the use of different types of information, should be monitored and evaluated.

19. Delegates also requested that the cost of TQI be monitored. Many anticipated that significant procedural changes would be required, although some reported that they already

require summaries from external examiners. Delegates noted that although the costs of TQI would be less than subject review, the costs of operating the new QA framework are increasingly centralised in institutions.

Annex D
Explanation of revisions to the published information specification

Quantitative information

1. HEFCE 02/15 paragraph 12a recommended that the following quantitative information on quality and standards of learning and teaching at each HEI should be published:

a. HESA data on student entry qualifications (including A-levels, access courses, vocational qualifications, and Scottish Highers).
b. Performance indicators and benchmarks published by the higher education funding bodies on progression and successful completion for full-time first degree students (separately for progression after the first year, and for all years of the programme).
c. HESA data on class of first degree, by subject area.
d. Performance indicators and benchmarks published by the higher education funding bodies on first destinations/employment outcomes for full-time first degree students.

Data granularity and benchmarks

2. HEFCE 02/15 had recommended that the data be provided at the level of 19 JACS-based subject areas, to provide an appropriate balance between institution-level and programme-level information, and to align with other information (for example UCAS and HESA data). However, it did recognise that:

a. Further consideration would be needed for the allocation of some disciplinary areas (psychology, geography, social studies, English and initial teacher training) within the coding system.
b. To produce the proposed progression, completion and employment information, HESA and HEFCE would need to consider the feasibility of developing performance indicators (PIs) and benchmarks at subject level.
c. PIs and benchmarks focus on full-time undergraduates, and limiting the information in this way would provide a distorted picture of HEIs with large numbers of part-time or postgraduate students. Such institutions were recommended to provide their own additional information on these students.

3. HEFCE has assessed the feasibility of producing subject level PIs and benchmarks, using the current methodology. We concluded that the current method of projecting outcomes is unsuited to disaggregation below institutional level due to transfers between subjects and the small numbers that would be used in forming the projections. In addition, the analysis found that where cohorts were small (less than 200) the performance relative to benchmark was liable to vary significantly year on year. At subject level a significant number of cohorts were below this limit. Therefore at this stage we concluded that PIs and benchmarks could not be produced at subject level.

4. Available evidence indicates that stakeholders demand information at a detailed level, to help form judgements about individual programmes. Thus, for the purposes of the pilot, we produced data initially at JACS subject group level and subsequently at JACS principal subject level. This had several consequences for the data. While PIs and benchmarks could not be included, it did mean that data could be presented consistently for relatively small groups of students, thus satisfying the stakeholder demand for information at a fine level of granularity. It also allowed the full inclusion of part-time and postgraduate students, thus avoiding the distorted picture that would emerge for some institutions. Also, by producing data at JACS principal subject level rather than JACS subject group level, the need to reconsider the allocation of some of the disciplines identified above is avoided, as each will be accessible as a distinct principal subject.

5. In the light of the pilot approach, the following methodology was developed:

a. Using the benefits of electronic publishing technology, data will be provided in a dynamic database, in which users can select subjects in combinations and at levels essentially of their own choosing, down to and including JACS principal subject level. HESA subject areas will be offered as standard combinations.

b. Where the numbers are so small in any given subject at a given institution as to render the data meaningless, the data will not be provided and users of the site will be offered broader subject combinations.

6. We believe this approach better meets the public information need, at no extra cost to institutions, and avoids the distortions of excluding part-time and postgraduate students. We recognise that benchmarks, if feasible, would have been desirable; therefore, to help contextualise the data, links will be provided to the HESA web-site where there are published performance indicators and benchmarks at institution level. We will continue to assess ways of developing benchmark information at subject level.

Common job types

7. An additional item to those defined in HEFCE 02/15 was piloted, on the common job types of graduates using Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) data from the First Destination Survey (FDS). This was strongly welcomed by the pilot focus groups as valuable information, and therefore this item will be included in the TQI dataset. It will be generated from SOC 2000 data from future Destination of Leavers from HE surveys (these surveys replace the FDS).

Data definitions

8. In producing the pilot data, a number of issues were addressed, including the definitions used to generate the data from HESA records, the headings and further information used to describe the data, the use of a rounding strategy to avoid the potential identification of individuals, and the treatment of joint honours students. These issues are set out in greater detail and are being consulted on by HESA, in its consultation document available at www.hesa.ac.uk/circulars/student/home.htm.

Qualitative information

9. HEFCE 02/15 paragraph 12b recommended that the following qualitative information on quality and standards of learning and teaching at each HEI should be published:

a. Summaries of external examiners' reports on each programme.
b. A voluntary commentary by the HEI at whole institution level on the findings of external examiners' reports.
c. Feedback from recent graduates, disaggregated by institution, collected through a national survey.
d. Feedback from current students collected through HEIs' own surveys, undertaken on a more consistent basis than now.
e. A summary statement of the institution's learning and teaching strategy, as presented to HEFCE under the Teaching Quality Enhancement Fund programme.
f. Summary statements of the results of, and the actions taken in response to, periodic programme and departmental reviews, to be undertaken at intervals of not more than six years.
g. Summaries of the HEI's links with relevant employers, how the institution identifies employer needs and opinions, and how those are used to develop the relevance and richness of learning programmes. These should be included as part of learning and teaching strategies (item e. above) and in individual programme specifications.

Summaries of external examiners' reports

10. The pilot process and dissemination events raised several issues around the publication of external examiner reports, including:

a. Variations between HEIs' external examination systems mean that HEIs do not always appoint examiners whose responsibilities relate to discrete awards or programmes. If summaries are required at programme level this could raise significant complications for provision where examiners' reports do not map directly to programmes.
b. Stakeholders tended to view the examples provided on the pilot TQI site as wordy and/or jargonistic, raising issues about the level of detail that should usefully be published, and about the format and editorial style of the summaries.
c. Producing the summaries as proposed in HEFCE 02/15 could involve significant costs to HEIs.
d. Examiners themselves had mixed views about this new public role, but would be especially hesitant to act if exposed to legal liabilities.
e. Some concerns were raised that public disclosure could affect the openness and frankness of examiners' reports to institutions.

11. In response to these issues, the requirements have been revised to remove excessive costs and potentially adverse effects on the external examiner system, and at the same time focus the information more directly on public information requirements:

a. Summaries can be provided, as appropriate to the institution's external examination structure, at the programme or subject level or a combination thereof. Where reports are provided at subject level, HEIs will need to provide information to map reports to programmes, so that readers interested in particular programmes will be able to access relevant summaries. HEIs will also have the option of providing an explanation of the structure of the external examination system, and the management of external examiners at the HEI, to aid public understanding of the context of the summaries.

b. The template has been revised in several ways:

i. The examiner's name and year of appointment are no longer included. This does not affect any legal liabilities, but in practical terms will reduce the likelihood of examiners being contacted directly by members of the public for further information. Note, however, that examiners have the moral right to be attributed if they wish.

ii. The three key statements about standards, assessment and student performance are more formulaic. This is intended to convey clear judgements to the public, and to enable the conclusions of examiners appointed to individual modules or programme elements to be aggregated up to programme or subject level summaries.

iii. The textual description (field 8) is not intended to summarise all the findings and recommendations of examiners, many of which may be technical in nature or of questionable public value. It is intended to highlight those findings which are likely to be of public interest. In considering this issue, institutions should note that we are committed to reviewing TQI within two years of implementation, to ensure that it is achieving its objectives. If the review provides evidence that institutions are not providing sufficient information to meet the public need, we may strengthen this guidance in future. In addition, the implications of the Freedom of Information Act should be considered. Essentially, all the information in external examiners' reports will have to be disclosed on request. Summaries which provide adequate disclosure on matters of public interest will be of greater value to institutions in pre-empting the need to respond individually to enquiries.

iv. Institutions will have the opportunity to provide a response to each summary, rather than an overall response to examiners' reports at HEI level (as proposed in HEFCE 02/15). This will improve the way in which institutions will be able to demonstrate the effectiveness of their assurance procedures to the

public, particularly as the TQI site builds up over time to provide a three year record of examiners' findings and institutions' responses.

12. In light of the more formulaic nature of the template, while it is still recommended that the summaries are authored by examiners, it may be more appropriate in certain circumstances for institutions to prepare the summaries. In such cases, the text should be agreed by the relevant examiners before publication.

13. As discussed in Annex G, the institution rather than the examiners would be liable for the published summaries. We recognise that this responsibility exposes the HEI to two kinds of potential risk:

a. That a summary may include defamatory material or identify individuals in a way that could expose the HEI to liability if published.
b. That an examiner's conclusions may be unreasonably critical of the HEI, and if published, could unfairly damage the reputation of the HEI.

14. If either case occurs, the institution should take up the matter with the examiner to seek a resolution. If necessary, this should include seeking a third party opinion which both parties would agree to accept in advance. On matters of legal liability, this should be an impartial legal opinion.

15. If, after such processes, a resolution cannot be achieved, the HEI will have the right to withhold publication of the offending comments, conclusions or summary. Delayed or withheld information will be identified on the TQI site as being not yet reported. We will devise, with HERO and the QAA, a method of monitoring the completeness of the information and responding to 'causes for concern' to ensure that information is withheld from publication only for legitimate reasons.

Student feedback

16. Work on the national student survey and internal student feedback were undertaken as a separate project commissioned by HEFCE, overseen by the Student Feedback Project Steering Group, tasked with making recommendations in these areas. The project report 'Collecting and using student feedback on quality and standards of learning and teaching in HE' and the 'Report of the Student Feedback Project Steering Group' are available on the HEFCE web-site www.hefce.ac.uk under Publications/R&D reports.

17. The national student survey is currently being piloted, and we will consult with the sector before implementing the full-scale survey in 2004.

18. The Student Feedback Project Steering Group identified the primary purpose of internal feedback systems as contributing to the management and enhancement of quality. The steering group concluded that results of the national survey should be published at subject level, and queried the added value and cost-effectiveness of requiring publication of internal feedback as well. It also identified a danger that publication of internal feedback,

which would compel standardisation of feedback systems, could jeopardise emerging good practice. For these reasons, the sponsoring bodies have accepted the steering group's recommendation that HEIs should not be required to publish the results of internal feedback, although over time institutions may wish to do so through an evolution towards more public exposure of information.

Summaries of periodic reviews and institutions' learning and teaching strategies

19. These requirements remain unchanged. A template for the summary was produced and used successfully in the pilot, and is now provided at Annex A2.

Employer links

20. The requirement for providing information on employer links remains unchanged. The TQI pilot institutions provided this as a separate document. Institutions may do this or could include the information in the summary of the learning and teaching strategy, with supplementary information in published programme specifications.

Programme specifications

21. Programme specifications were not included in the published information requirements in HEFCE 02/15. However, the QAA has re-stated its published policy that programme specifications, which are a valuable source of information for prospective students and recruiters of graduates, should be made publicly available, and will be monitoring this in its institutional audits from December 2004. Where institutions do publish them on their web-sites, they are recommended to link these to the TQI site, using a common addressing methodology that will be developed by HERO.

Annex E
Form to nominate institutional TQI contacts

Institution name:.....

Senior management contact:.....
e-mail address:.....
(Normally the person with overall management responsibility for the documents being summarised)

Main information contact for TQI data:.....
e-mail address:.....
(Normally the person with operational responsibility for the provision and maintenance of the data on the site)

Technical contact:.....
e-mail address:.....
(Normally the person with responsibility for the mounting of data on HERO, perhaps someone in the webmaster section. Note there will already be such a person with technical responsibility for the current HERO data – the TQI technical contact can be that person or another).

Other people to be included on an e-mail list used for distributing information about the TQI development at HERO:

Name.....
Role.....e-mail.....
Name.....
Role.....e-mail.....
Name.....
Role.....e-mail.....
Name.....
Role.....e-mail.....

Name of person completing the form:.....
Signature..... Date.....

Please fill out this form and return by 1 December 2003 to:
Catherine Houghton
HERO
Room 206 2nd Floor
Technopole
Kings Manor
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 6PA
The form can also be e-mailed to catherine.houghton@unn.ac.uk

Annex F
JACS principal subjects and HESA subject areas

1. The Joint Academic Coding System (JACS) is a hierarchical subject coding system, with 19 main subject groups (each coded with a single letter) and below them 141 principal subjects (each coded with a letter followed by a non-zero digit and two zeros).

2. Partly in response to discussions about public information, HESA has identified 19 subject areas, based on the JACS system. These provide a more suitable categorisation of subjects for the purposes of published information, and users of the TQI site will be offered these subject areas as standard combinations of JACS principal subjects. Users will also be able to select other combinations, down to and including individual principal subjects.

3. The JACS principal subjects are listed below, under their JACS subject groups. A table of the HESA subject areas, mapped to JACS codes, is also provided. Further information on the JACS coding system and the HESA subject areas is available on the HESA web-site, www.hesa.ac.uk.

A Medicine and Dentistry
A100 Pre-clinical Medicine
A200 Pre-clinical Dentistry
A300 Clinical Medicine
A400 Clinical Dentistry
A900 Others in Medicine and Dentistry

B Subjects Allied to Medicine
B100 Anatomy, Physiology and Pathology
B200 Pharmacology, Toxicology and Pharmacy
B300 Complementary Medicine
B400 Nutrition
B500 Ophthalmics
B600 Aural and Oral Sciences
B700 Nursing
B800 Medical Technology
B900 Others in Subjects allied to Medicine

C Biological Sciences
C100 Biology
C200 Botany
C300 Zoology
C400 Genetics
C500 Microbiology
C600 Sports Science
C700 Molecular Biology, Biophysics and Biochemistry
C800 Psychology

C900 Others in Biological Sciences

D Veterinary Sciences, Agriculture and related subjects
D100 Pre-clinical Veterinary Medicine
D200 Clinical Veterinary Medicine and Dentistry
D300 Animal Science
D400 Agriculture
D500 Forestry
D600 Food and Beverage studies
D700 Agricultural Sciences
D900 Others in Veterinary Sciences, Agriculture and related subjects

F Physical Sciences
F100 Chemistry
F200 Materials Science
F300 Physics
F400 Forensic and Archaeological Science
F500 Astronomy
F600 Geology
F700 Ocean Sciences
F800 Physical and Terrestrial Geographical and Environmental Sciences
F900 Others in Physical Sciences

G Mathematical and Computer Sciences
G100 Mathematics
G200 Operational Research
G300 Statistics
G400 Computer Science
G500 Information Systems
G600 Software Engineering
G700 Artificial Intelligence
G900 Others in Mathematical and Computing Sciences

H Engineering
H100 General Engineering
H200 Civil Engineering
H300 Mechanical Engineering
H400 Aerospace Engineering
H500 Naval Architecture
H600 Electronic and Electrical Engineering
H700 Production and Manufacturing Engineering
H800 Chemical, Process and Energy Engineering
H900 Others in Engineering

J Technologies
J100 Minerals Technology
J200 Metallurgy
J300 Ceramics and Glasses
J400 Polymers and Textiles
J500 Materials Technology not otherwise specified
J600 Maritime Technology
J700 Industrial Biotechnology
J900 Others in Technology

K Architecture, Building and Planning
K100 Architecture
K200 Building
K300 Landscape Design
K400 Planning (Urban, Rural and Regional)
K900 Others in Architecture, Building and Planning

L Social studies
L100 Economics
L200 Politics
L300 Sociology
L400 Social Policy
L500 Social Work
L600 Anthropology
L700 Human and Social Geography
L900 Others in Social studies

M Law
M100 Law by area
M200 Law by topic

N Business and Administrative Studies
N100 Business studies
N200 Management studies
N300 Finance
N400 Accounting
N500 Marketing
N600 Human Resource Management
N700 Office skills
N800 Tourism, Transport and Travel
N900 Others in Business and Administrative studies

P Mass Communications and Documentation
P100 Information Services
P200 Publicity studies
P300 Media studies

P400 Publishing
P500 Journalism
P900 Others in Mass Communications and Documentation

Q Linguistics, Classics and related subjects
Q100 Linguistics
Q200 Comparative Literary studies
Q300 English studies
Q400 Ancient Language studies
Q500 Celtic studies
Q600 Latin studies
Q700 Classical Greek studies
Q800 Classical studies
Q900 Others in Linguistics, Classics and related subjects

R European Languages, Literature and related subjects
R100 French studies
R200 German studies
R300 Italian studies
R400 Spanish studies
R500 Portuguese studies
R600 Scandinavian studies
R700 Russian and East European studies
R900 Others in European Languages, Literature and related subjects

T Eastern, Asiatic, African, American and Australasian Languages, Literature and related subjects
T100 Chinese studies
T200 Japanese studies
T300 South Asian studies
T400 Other Asian studies
T500 African studies
T600 Modern Middle Eastern studies
T700 American studies
T800 Australasian studies
T900 Others in Eastern, Asiatic, African, American and Australasian Languages, Literature and related subjects

V Historical and Philosophical Studies
V100 History by period
V200 History by area
V300 History by topic
V400 Archaeology
V500 Philosophy
V600 Theology and Religious studies

V900 Others in Historical and Philosophical studies

W Creative Arts and Design
W100 Fine Art
W200 Design studies
W300 Music
W400 Drama
W500 Dance
W600 Cinematics and Photography
W700 Crafts
W800 Imaginative Writing
W900 Others in Creative Arts and Design

X Education
X100 Training Teachers
X200 Research and Study Skills in Education
X300 Academic studies in Education
X900 Others in Education

HESA Subject Areas	JACS codes
Medicine & dentistry	A
Subjects allied to medicine	B
Biological sciences	C
Veterinary science	D1/2
Agriculture & related subjects	D0/3/4/5/6/7/9
Physical sciences	F
Mathematical sciences	G0/1/2/3/91/99
Computer science	G4/5/6/7/92
Engineering & technology	H,J
Architecture, building & planning	K
Social studies	L
Law	M
Business & administrative studies	N
Mass communications & documentation	P
Languages	Q,R,T
Historical & philosophical studies	V
Creative arts & design	W
Education	X
Combined	Y

Annex G
Summary of legal issues and advice

1. This annex presents a summary of legal advice received by HEFCE. It is not intended to substitute for an institution's own advice and judgement.

Legal duties and disclaimers

2. HEIs have two sets of duties in respect of the information. The first is to meet HEFCE's expectations that the data are compiled carefully, kept complete and up to date, and corrected when inaccuracies are discovered. HEFCE will monitor this through the arrangements set out in the main part of this document.

3. Institutions also have a legal duty, and could therefore be liable, to third parties who may rely on the information for some particular purpose. However, the audience for and purposes of the information, and thus the uses to which the information may be put, are broad. This points away from the likelihood of liability. Nevertheless, in order to manage their liabilities, institutions are recommended to include with their TQI data a statement of:

- the purpose for which the information was made available
- who the data are addressed to, and who could rely on the data
- what can be said about accuracy (for example: 'The HEI has taken reasonable steps to ensure the accuracy of these data at the date of publication. However anyone wishing to make use of any of these data is advised to satisfy themselves as to the accuracy of the data before doing so.')
- a limit on any liability that might arise (for example, a statement that none of the data are to be taken as forming any part of any contract with the HEI).

4. Any statement would have to be constructed so as to be compliant with the Unfair Contract Terms Act 1979 and Unfair Terms in Consumer Contracts Regulations 1999.

5. The extranet provided by HERO to support institutions will provide examples of disclaimers, although HEIs may wish to seek their own legal advice on the wording of such disclaimers.

6. Institutions are advised to ensure that they do not publish defamatory material, that they comply with the Data Protection Act, and do not act in a way which could undermine the 'trust and confidence' of their employees. They are thus advised not to identify employees as subjects of published material nor to identify individuals in any part of the TQI dataset.

7. In addition, data should be accurately dated, to enable readers to judge the currency.

Copyright

8. Where copyright for material created by HEI staff rests is primarily a matter for local agreement, although it more often rests with the staff member concerned than would be

common in other sectors. In general the HEI is taken as having a licence to do with the material whatever it had in mind when it called for the material to be created. This would cover published material to inform the public about the HEI, although it may not cover publication for commercial ends. If the HEI intends to exploit the material commercially then it should make clear to the authors that it intends to do so.

9. Staff at the HEI who author the material for publication may wish their copyright acknowledged. Copyright statements on HEI web-sites should be sufficient to do this and could be mirrored on the TQI site.

10. The information will be made freely available to the public for non-commercial and non-revenue generating use only. Those wishing to make any other use will be asked to contact the rights holder with a view to securing a licence.

Insurance

11. Our legal advice is that it is unlikely that additional legal insurance for HEIs would be cost-effective, on the grounds that claims are unlikely, and any claim which arises out of the publication of the data is unlikely to be substantial.

Liabilities for HERO

12. HERO, as publisher of the information, could be exposed to liabilities if, for example, it publishes defamatory material. The site will therefore include a disclaimer that HERO is not responsible for the content of the information published. HERO will also preserve the right to remove allegedly offending material until the supplying HEI itself has resolved whatever matter has been complained of.

Freedom of Information Act

13. The Freedom of Information Act will come into force from January 2005. Its implications, in relation to TQI, are that any individual will have the right to request access to the information in an external examiner's or other internal report (although not necessarily the report itself). Published summaries could therefore be useful to institutions in pre-empting the need to respond to some individual enquiries from members of the public. Nevertheless, in response to individual enquiries, institutions may be obliged to provide information in addition to that included in the summaries.

Qualified privilege for external examiners

14. Our advice is that external examiners would not be exposed to unacceptable liabilities and would be covered by 'qualified privilege', which covers situations where there is some public interest in allowing the communication to be made. Under qualified privilege, no action for defamation is possible unless it can be demonstrated that the examiner acted maliciously. External examiners should be advised to address their reports specifically to the appropriate person within the HEI, and to add to their reports that the report is for the use of

the HEI for specified internal purposes only, and that any other use or publication of the report is the sole responsibility of the HEI. HEIs should, however, make their external examiners aware that one of the uses of their reports will be to provide information to be published. External examiners' consent to act will constitute the necessary implied licence to use their copyright.

15. As they are responsible for publishing the summaries, HEIs may be exposed to some risks. The process described at Annex D, paragraphs 13-15, allows institutions to manage these risks.

16. HEIs may wish to publish an additional disclaimer indicating that the views of the external examiners are their own and cannot be deemed accurate by the HEI.

Annex H
Information which should be available in all HEIs

1. This annex reproduces paragraph 11 of HEFCE 02/15, setting out the information that should be available in all HEIs for the purposes of setting, monitoring and developing quality and standards:

a. Information on the institutional context:

i. The HEI's mission statement.

ii. Relevant sections of the HEI's corporate plan.

iii. Statement of the HEI's quality assurance policies and processes.

iv. The HEI's learning and teaching strategy and periodic reviews of progress.

b. Information on student admission, progression and completion:

i. Student qualifications on entry.

ii. The range of student entrants classified by age, gender, ethnicity, socio-economic background, disability and geographical origin as returned to HESA.

iii. Student progression and retention data for each year of each course/programme, differentiating between failure and withdrawal.

iv. Data on student completion.

v. Data on qualifications awarded to students.

vi. Data on the employment/training outcomes for graduates from the First Destination Survey.

c. Information on the HEI's internal procedures for assuring academic quality and standards:

i. Information on programme approval, monitoring and review:

- programme specifications
- a statement of the respective roles, responsibilities and authority of different bodies within the HEI involved in programme approval and review

- key outcomes of programme approval, and annual monitoring and review processes
- periodic internal reports of major programme reviews
- reports of periodic internal reviews by the institution of departments or faculties
- accreditation and monitoring reports by professional, statutory or regulatory bodies.

ii. Information on assessment procedures and outcomes:

- assessment strategies, processes and procedures
- the range and nature of student work
- external examiners' reports, analysis of their findings and the actions taken in response
- reports of periodic reviews of the appropriateness of assessment methods used.

iii. Information on student satisfaction with their HE experience, covering the views of students on:

- arrangements for academic and tutorial guidance, support and supervision
- library services and IT support
- suitability of accommodation, equipment and facilities for teaching and learning
- perceptions of the quality of teaching and the range of teaching and learning methods
- assessment arrangements
- quality of pastoral support.

iv. Information and evidence available to teams undertaking HEIs' own internal reviews of quality and standards in relation to:

- the effectiveness of teaching and learning, in relation to programme aims and curriculum content as they evolve over time

- the range of teaching methods used
- the availability and use of specialist equipment and other resources and materials to support learning and teaching
- staff access to professional development to improve teaching performance, including peer observation and mentoring programmes
- the use of external benchmarking and other comparators both at home and overseas
- the involvement of external peers in the review method, their observations, and the action taken in response.

List of abbreviations

FEC	Further education college
HE	Higher education
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
HEI	Higher education institution
HERO	Higher Education Research Opportunities – the official gateway site to the UK's universities, colleges and research organisations (www.hero.ac.uk)
HESA	Higher Education Statistics Agency
Institutional audit	New process of ensuring the quality of programmes and standards of awards within higher education
JACS	Joint Academic Coding System
PI	Performance indicator
QA	Quality assurance
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
SCOP	Standing Conference of Principals
TQI	Teaching Quality Information. This refers to the information about quality and standards that will be published through HERO on the TQI web-site
TTA	Teacher Training Agency

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

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